

country and that presses with peculiar severity on our own part of it, they recommend to ministers and sessions that the prayerful attention of congregations be turned to the subject, acknowledging the duty of humbling ourselves under the chastening hand of God, and learning the lessons he is teaching, and at the same time with all our christian sympathy, expressing our feeling for the sufferings of members who are struggling with privation and anxiety, and our sense of our obligation to give all the effective aid in our power. The Presbytery recommend Sabbath, 20th Dec, as a fitting day for the performance of this duty, and feel assured that, at such a season, sessions will be forward to bring all the resources at their command to bear on the necessities of their suffering members." The Rev. Dr. Jeffrey, one of the members, had previously preached a sermon on the subject, which has since been published under the title, "God's Judgment on the Merchant City." The following extract, we fear, is as applicable to Canada as to Glasgow.]

As one step towards the explanation of the present crisis, we would remark that it may be considered as *the judgment of God upon commercial deception*. It is not difficult to read in this calamity God's distinct disapproval of that system of commerce which is founded upon a lie. It is a very common thing in this city for large commercial establishments to be bolstered up by a fictitious capital, and to be conducted under the shadow of a public deception. Men who have nothing to risk, and in most cases neither honour nor honesty to lose, erect splendid and spacious warehouses; they procure, through a breach of trust on the part of others, or through their own dexterous *finesse*, bills of bank accommodation by the gross; they undertake enormous liabilities; they manage to worm themselves into extensive business connections, and they get multitudes seriously involved with them in business transactions; if they succeed, they rise rapidly to fortune; if they fail, if their schemes miscarry, so far as they are concerned it is only a bad speculation; but how many are doomed to suffer—how many honest men are wrecked and ruined in their worldly circumstances by their upstart ambition. When business is conducted upon such principles, it cannot prosper under the providence of the God of truth and righteousness. When men take credit for a capital which they do not possess; which does not, in fact, exist; which is purely fictitious, it is a gross imposition upon the world, and it is a crying abomination in the ear of the Lord. Were it not for the distress it entails upon others, most heartily would we sympathise with the sequestration of all such unscrupulous adventurers; and we would consider society eased of its worst gang of pickpockets if they were banished to Norfolk Island, to find out associates after their own kind among exiled blackguardism. Who that reads the revelations which insolvents of this type make before the Sheriff's Court from day to day, of unblushing debauchery, of wasteful dissipation, of systematised robbery, carried on under the mask of merchandise, but feels that the atmosphere of the city would breathe freer if disinfected from the pollution of their presence, and that even the morality of a penal settlement would be deteriorated by their importation? All that system of trade which seeks to drive an extensive business without a correspondingly large capital, is based upon a deception, and though it may be winked at by men, it is properly visited by God with judgment.

The secret of this wholesale imposture is not difficult to discover; it is to be found in the desire to be hastily rich. Here we advance it as a Scriptural doctrine, that when a man hastens to be rich, the end cannot be blessed of God. "They that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts." It is impossible, from the nature of things, that a fortune can be realized in a day concurrently with the will of Providence; and no prosperity can be crowned with the blessing of heaven that is founded upon a falsehood. Honest industry and diligence in business are God's stereotyped plan for realizing a competence or reaching wealth, and whatever diverges from the